

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph at page 6, lines 9-22, with the following amended paragraph:

In another embodiment, the authentication flag comprises a hardware "fuse". A hardware fuse is a well known device which generally comprises a conductor capable of being destroyed by an electric current. In the present case, if processor 102 determines that a piece of authenticated software has been loaded onto computing device 100, processor 102 sends a signal to "set" the hardware fuse, i.e., destroy the conductor relating to the fuse. When processor 102 is presented with available software to be loaded onto computing device 100, the fuse is checked to determine if it has been previously blown, or set. If it is set, this indicates that at least one piece of authenticated software has been loaded onto computing device 100, and that only authenticated software can be loaded onto computing device 100. This method of determining the authentication status of computing device 100 [[102]] is advantageous in that processor 102 does not have to perform an authentication procedure on resident software each time software is available to be loaded onto computing device 100.

Please replace the paragraph at page 8, lines 8-19, with the following amended paragraph:

In step 202, processor 102 determines whether or not resident software stored in application storage device 106 has been authenticated, using one or more techniques described above. If the resident software is not authenticated, processor then determines whether or not the available software is authenticated, as shown in step 204. Again, processor 102 performs authentication on the available software as described above. If the available software is authenticated, an authentication flag is set in step 206. The authentication flag is an indication that computing device 100 may only accept authenticated software. After the authentication flag has been set, the available software is loaded onto computing device 100, as shown in step 208. If the available software is not authenticated, it is loaded onto computing device 100 without setting the authentication flag, as shown in step 210.